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NEW POEMS  
*and*  
A PLAY

By P. P. DU PONT



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# NEW POEMS *and* A PLAY

By P. F. DU PONT

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1914  
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by  
P. F. DU PONT  
Author of "Under the Blue Sky" and "Currente Calamo"

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## **Dedicated to the Reader**

Whoe'er you are, whate'er your clime,  
    Howe'er affairs of life be pleading you—  
You, as the author of this rhyme,  
    Who know not where your path is leading you—  
To you this little book I send,  
    And, though your way be hard and far,  
May it at last around some bend,  
    Or through some rift of clouds that end,  
        Be lighted by a star.



## Preface

Should any of the trifles contained in this small volume find their way to the hearts of the lovers of poesy, I shall feel amply justified in publishing in verse form these miscellaneous expressions of thought.

THE AUTHOR.

Merion, Pa., 1914.

N.B.—“The Ballad of the Freight” and fifteen other poems contained in this volume were published, several years ago, in *The Delaware Magazine*.



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## The Ballad of the Freight

By a city's midnight breathing,  
Where the furnaces are seething  
Flame, their inky ringlets wreathing

On the August air a pest,  
Lies the hot and giant freight yard  
Of a trunk-line, and a great yard,  
For it is a very gate yard

And the rushing traffic's quest.

There the arc lights flash and simmer,  
There the incandescents glimmer,  
And the starry switch lamps, dimmer,

Shine out their very best;  
There the stray caboose comes sliding  
Past the coal train on the siding,  
Where the weary bums are hiding

For a ride out to the West.

There the brakemen toiled and sweated,  
The dispatcher fumed and fretted,  
And across the switches, netted,

Strains the mogul with a zest;  
There they shunted into linement,  
With a most profane refinement,  
What is known as a consignment

For a freight train going West.

Bales and boxes, bags and baskets,  
Clothing, rifles, quilting, caskets,  
Boilers, engines, shafting, gaskets,  
Steel that's drawn and rolled and pressed;  
Cells, electrical equipment,  
Window-screenings, made the shipment;  
And a blessed lot each trip meant  
To the great and busy West.

(Now the switches lock and tighten,  
Now the signals move and brighten,  
Rail and sill and ballast whiten  
In the generated arc  
Of the Special—she's our darling—  
Hear her steaming pistons snarling  
While she whoops it, ki-ki-yarling,  
Comet showering through the dark.

Engine, coaches, Pullmans finer,  
Rounded windows as a liner,  
Then the whit'ning of the diner—  
Observation shining best;  
She can gather or disband you,  
Win your faith and understand you,  
And in twenty hours land you  
In a city in the West.)

Now the 'clear' is up before us,  
Now the mogul wails dolorous,  
Now the box cars buck in chorus  
Rolling out as though distressed;

Billy Brady at the throttle,  
Drinking coffee from a bottle,  
Uses language Aristotle  
Never knew or even guessed.

By the streams where grow the willows,  
Through the townships, by the villas,  
Where the restless on their pillows  
Have their nerves put to a test;  
Where the tunnels drill the ridges,  
Where ravines are spanned with bridges—  
Spider-woof of hearth and sledges—  
Snorts the freight train rolling West.

And the girls the crew are leaving,  
Some to trusting, some to grieving,  
Some themselves at home deceiving—  
Boarder, and you know the rest—  
Gentle mothers children caring,  
Gassing gossips, scandal airing,  
While the freight train roars a-tearing  
Down the gradients to the West.

'Tis a growth of many stages,  
'Tis a gift of all the ages,  
'Tis the work of smiths and sages—  
All of those who dreamed the best;  
Of its beauty and its glory  
Children learn from sires hoary,  
Learn the true and wond'rous story  
Of the freight train rolling West.

## The Thief

The nameless terrors of the sleeping brain,  
Subconscious thoughts that have distressed our night,  
Are they the giants of our grief and pain  
That have attacked us in the hours of light?

Mayhap infused by evil, stronger mind,  
Hurled through the vibrant waves of air afar,  
Hurled, though with softness of the summer wind,  
Or as liquefient light from star to star.

Mayhap some strong dynamic will whose fire  
Snapped and flashed bluely with a demon power,  
Hap'ly the sprite of some three-times-great sire  
Come to torment us at the midnight hour.

Come from a body long returned to earth,  
There in the moon-lit churchyard lying still,  
That for a respite it may seek new birth  
And through our living bodies work its will.

And when, at times, in sleep a hand we feel  
Around our foreheads grope and hunt its way,  
'Tis the dead hand of him who comes to steal  
The dream thoughts that are lost at light of day.

Back, oh bold spirit, to your dungeon deep,  
Back to your grave, oh long-departed guest,  
Vex not our rest time and our hours of sleep,  
Rob not our minds—all that we count the best.

## The White Notchman

As the lad who lies at the bank of a creek,  
Where the grass and the clovers tangle thick,  
And notches away with his knife at a stick

Till the blade has slipped and stung;  
There is blood for the toll of the Notchman white,  
And he notches away in the day and the night—  
On the ocean plain or the mountain height—  
And he notches the human lung.

*Now the lung of the Eskimo is white, as white as the driven snow;*  
*And brown is the lung of the country lad where the crops of the country grow;*  
*But the lung of the city man is black, as black as a carrion crow;*  
*And that is the lung, the lung of all lungs, the lung where the Notchmen mow.*

Lanier of the marsh, the leaf and the tree,  
Dear Stevenson painting the rogues of the sea,  
And Keats, of *La Belle Dame sans Merci*,

Have bow'd to the Notchman white;  
The pauper who dies with a kick and a twitch,  
The heiress who fights with her back to the ditch,  
And the sage and fools and the poor and the rich  
Have bow'd to his bane and blight.

*Now it may be wise that those who may for a change of climate go,*  
*'Tis a longer run for the special train to ease the family's woe,*

*'Tis a longer run for the special train, though they  
haven't the ghost of a show,  
For wherever they roam there's a light red foam, a foam  
that the "lungers" know.*

Can science unravel this riddle at last,  
Destroy the destroyer of centuries past?  
Ah, then from the nations' orchestra vast,  
    Shall a pæan of joy be sung,  
For the truce to those in horrible plight  
Who flee from the plain to the mountain height  
In the hope (vain hope) for the respite right  
From the work of the terrible Notchman white  
    As he notches the human lung.

## Child Labor

My happiest times have been in dreams,  
    In fairy-lands bedecked with flowers,  
Sequestered vales where wan'dring streams  
Are limpid as a crystal's gleams  
And not besmirched with oily steams  
    As are these streams of ours.

Along my streams the fairies play  
    In colors gay and bright;  
Along our streams at break of day  
Pale little somber children may  
Be seen to stumble on their way  
    As though too short their night.

As captives to an ogre's hall  
    Weary and wan they go,  
To vast machines that rise and fall  
In busy rows along the wall—  
And little children tend them all  
    Because their wage is low.

The cost sheet is their winding band,  
    But by those streams of mine  
(Those streams within that fairer land)  
The fairies' children, hand in hand,  
Run racing o'er the golden sand  
    And wreaths of flowers twine.

This world is not the happy place  
The idle wealthy deem;  
Their tiny unmissed share to those  
Well published lists of donors goes,  
But what about the awful woes  
Of little slaves to steam?

Oh, would that on our rolling earth,  
This ancient whirling sphere,  
That every child could join that band  
And play within that fairer land  
And romp upon that golden sand—  
Each blessed little dear!

There is no thing in all this world  
Where thirst for gain beguiles,  
To match that glimpse of paradise,  
That little peep through Heaven's skies—  
To match the laughter in the eyes  
Of any child that smiles.

## The Terminal

Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong, ding dong,  
Slow through the gloom the monster steams,  
Over the myriad switches along  
    Into the station of dreams;  
And ever I feel a shudder slight,  
    For, like to an omen ill it seems,  
Rolling down as a pall of night  
    Into the station of dreams.

(The weak, the strong, the poor, the rich—  
    What hopes transpire! what visions fail!)  
As, moody, over many a switch  
    And over the dripping rail  
Like some great hunted beast you go,  
    Hunted from West to East,  
Into the terminal dark and low  
    To bring your share of joy or woe  
    To rich and poor and strong and frail  
    Tho' they need it most or least!

*Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong, ding dong,  
Slow through the gloom the monster steams,  
Over the myriad switches along  
    Into the station of dreams.  
And ever I feel a shudder slight,  
    For, like to an omen ill it seems,  
Rolling down as a pall of night  
    Into the station of dreams.*

## The Tigress

Her face was a woman's, that alone—

She'd not the pure, sweet look of a girl,  
Still-eyed and calm as the stars that shone  
In the violet skies with moon of pearl—  
Virtue and intellect never lit

That beautiful face or night or day,  
Nor a single gleam of mirth or wit  
Nor a sign of thought or fancy's play:  
One look she had, oh, I see it still—  
Terrible, terrible, strength of will.

"Twas strange how madly my love I planned;  
I spoke, but she said:—"No, 'tis not best;"  
But the while she softly took my hand  
And folded me to her throbbing breast.  
Then the raptured lover's words I poured;  
" 'Tis not for the best," she said, "no, no,  
'Tis not for the best, mine own adored;"  
But she clasped me tight and held me so.  
And at length no more her "no" was said,  
And she set the day and we were wed.

Sweet are the joys of a new-wed pair  
And long indeed is the fond embrace  
Of a manly form and woman fair—  
For fair she was in her form and face;

But ever she had that look of will,  
And the strangest heaving of her breast:  
Thought I, she is worn and feeling ill,  
She is shy and tired and needs some rest—  
So I kissed my darling bride “good night”  
And woke with the birds and morning light.

With indrawn breath in sickening hiss  
And horrible scream I leap from bed;  
What terrible transformation this:—  
Oh Christ! oh look at that awful head!  
Oh Lord my God! what is this I see?  
Kill me, oh God, and spare me the pain  
Awakening sight has brought to me  
Of woman-beast from jungle or plain—  
That loathsome thing in my home and bed,  
With the woman’s form and tigress head!

## Nemesis

(He.)

“Fairest maid of darkest night,  
When I say ‘I love you,’  
Can not you, with reason right,  
By the laws of mind and light,  
See I am above you?

Love for you was but a mood,  
Dusky Afric beauty;  
From this silent tropic wood,  
From this jungle solitude,  
I must go to duty.

Cling not to me pleadingly,  
Cease thy wild berating;  
Far across the Northern sea  
Wife and children wait for me—  
Long have been awaiting.

Back again another year  
I may come—no knowing;  
Here to find you in good cheer,  
With your net and bow and spear,  
And our children, growing.”

(She.)

“Is my lord in no way ruth  
To leave our happy dwelling?  
Do you find it too uncouth,  
Are you sure it is the truth  
That your heart is telling?

Oh, my lord, I’ll ever keep  
Love for you without you;  
Yet, e’er I am left to weep  
Here alone in jungle deep  
Look again about you.”

(Gazed he ’round with sneering pride  
To view the hovel lastly;  
She, with light’ning, panther stride,  
Drives the spear into his side,  
While he totters, ghastly.)

“Now your end is drawing near,  
You are going-going;  
Now I’ll live in better cheer,  
With my net and bow and spear  
And my children, growing.”

## **Haunted**

Oh, it's great to be decent lad and step the city highways,  
The sunny city highways where the girls all look so  
sweet;  
To meet with snobs conventional and reubens from the  
byways,  
To study all the varied types where all the types must  
meet—  
A world of pride and laughter, with the motors rolling  
after,  
And the dirty gamins, just as happy, playing in the  
street.  
And then along the walls of the houses, from their halls,  
Pour all those ghastly, ghostly faces bidding you  
retreat.

Oh, it's great to roam the forests when the morning  
breezes meet you,  
To shoulder through the thickets flushing quail without  
a gain,  
Or, where the wild-oats marshes wave about to greet you,  
To sit and wait for widgeons in the patter of the rain.  
But the chill to lonely gunner, not induced by being rain-  
full,  
When on the Purdey's mid-rib in the misty light  
appears  
That same old apparition, with its countenance so bane-  
ful,  
The one that's camp'd upon your trail and haunted  
you for years !

Oh, it's sweet to go to worship in the little village chapels,  
With the bonny lads and lassies and the old folks bent  
and gray;  
To hear the country choirs (with their swelling Adam's  
apples),  
To place your arms on ancient oak and bend your head  
and pray.  
But it's nothing less than awful to a man that is God-  
fearing  
To be terribly distracted when within the house of  
prayer,  
To feel that all around you there are phantom faces  
leering,  
To know that ghosts are playing on your shoulders—  
in your hair.

## Victory Out of Defeat

Weirdest of all my vanquished foes,  
(Vanquished or sleeping?—God but knows!)  
    Indefatigable and fraught  
        With demon wiles; we've fought and fought  
Leaving a trampled, bloody wake—  
    Oh God! that he may ne'er awake!

But see! a shudder shakes his frame,  
Subconscious thoughts without a name  
    Flash through his phantom brain the while  
        To vilify his evil smile—  
A Hell-born demon sprung to earth  
    To curse the Hell that gave him birth!

Largely upon the mood we're in  
Depends one's power to cope with sin,  
    With sin, that leering thing inert—  
        My better feelings all alert  
With fighting senses poised and trim;  
    My weaker self to welcome him.

Each verdant tree has some of blight  
To mar; each day can not be bright;  
    Each lovely rose has thorns to be  
        A likeness to humanity.  
Fashioned we are of weals and woes,  
    As tree and day and passing rose.

This is the lot for us of earth  
The God ordained:—a strife from birth;  
    To strive for with a might and main  
    Perfection we can ne'er attain,  
And all through life for Jesus' sake  
To leave the trampled, bloody wake,  
    Dying to know you've fought with sin  
    A bloody fight you could not win.

## Alcohol

The mind that swings the rum-bowl to the brain,  
Imbibing joy from fairest fields of grain,  
    Keys mind and body to the highest pitch—  
    Both to the ditch must go; why haste the ditch?

Why haste the ditch where demons in the clay  
Await to gnaw your coffin boards away,  
    Why shorten life with wine and maudlin song—  
    As sound of waves the cruel shores along?

What ghastly paradise the boozing-ken,  
Aristocratic rum-holes famed for men  
    Who love to dwell on superficial things—  
    Where blear-eyed beetles flit on poisoned wings.

*The mind that swings the rum-bowl to the brain,  
Imbibing joy from fairest fields of grain,  
    Keys mind and body to the highest pitch—  
    Both to the ditch must go; why haste the ditch?*

## A Portrait

I hate you, with your staring eyes of blue,  
Your form, your poise, your walk, your conscious  
face;

I hate—nay, nay, a thousand times untrue,  
I nothing hate from dirty deuce to ace—  
But you, you cause in me the greatest pall—  
Your form, your poise, your walk, your face, your all.

Your hair, in monumental wave serene,  
Over your brow a golden crown to be,  
Befitting well your station and your mein,  
Your form, your face, your fate, your destiny—  
What chances had you, had you been inclined,  
To learn to work, to think! Oh God! your mind!

Many are they who feel the scorch of fate,  
Of jilted love, of hope deferred, yet live;  
Many are they who learn to work and wait  
And reap rewards that work alone can give—  
Made of man's lust and sin and pride and pelf?  
Nay! By the gods! Yourself hath made yourself!

## How I Witnessed My Disintegration

I was dying—yes, they said so—  
In the quiet, lonely ward,  
And the pain that racked my head so  
And the pulsing of each cord  
All had ceased now; I was ready  
To be carried o'er the ford.

Low the light, (of this I'm certain)  
But no other knowledge I  
Had, as though a heavy curtain  
Overclosed my mental sky—  
Save that I was vaguely conscious  
Of the buzzing of a fly.

Then I died, and with the rattle  
Straight as arrow to me flew,  
Flew the fly—as every chattel  
Of my body was its due—  
Strange that I, the dying, died  
Yet *knew* this thing I surely *knew*.

On my eye he settled lightly,  
On the glazed and staring ball,  
Rubbed his limbs and pinions sprightly  
Then commenced to feast and crawl—  
Oh, I tried so hard to strike him!  
Oh, I tried so hard to call!

Then at once, as quick as lightning,  
Flies by countless thousands came,  
Little ones, and green ones, bright'ning,  
Swarming on my helpless frame—  
Then a change came, quick as magic  
In some Oriental game.

Not a fly had left a pinion,  
Not a fly the power of flight,  
All within my frame's dominion  
Was a mass of maggots white—  
How they fought, and fought and feasted,  
Oh, the vile disgusting sight!

Joined in groups they were and writhing,  
On each other massing high,  
Like to hosts in battle striving  
For decisive victory—  
And the center of the battle  
Was located in my eye.

As they fatten I diminish,  
As they feast they writhe and teem,  
Not to leave me till they finish  
Though my ribs are all agleam  
In a liquid putrefaction—  
When I wake, with piercing scream.

## I Dreamed (Oh God!) My Brain Did Rot

I dreamed (oh God!) my brain did rot,  
My body strong and free,  
Lived on, as lithe and beautiful  
As any verdant tree.

The peaceful sky of blue above,  
Beneath, a supple frame,  
Betwixt the two that loathsome thing—  
My rotting brain aflame.

Good thought fell out, weird dreams appeared,  
Night-flitting, as a bat,  
Vast ruthless schemes arranged themselves  
And whirled beneath my hat.

As one bedeil'd I wandered on  
A cruel way alone;  
The smile of friends smote at my heart  
As though a driven stone.

And then occurred a dreadful thing:  
I could no longer think—  
But from my rotting brain there rose  
A horrid pungent stink;

The stench of charnal-house where lie  
The dead piled high as three—  
Alone I walked, alone I sat,  
And always far to lee.

I am a man, and know man's lot  
Is here to suffer pains;  
But Hell, a pistol to my head  
Would blow these rotten brains.

The bluey trigger's curved to fit  
The index finger snug;  
A steady pull, the smokeless crack,  
And I—a broken jug.

My spirit rose transcendent then  
Enrobed in dazzling white,  
My brain a living brain again—  
A human brain aright.

That time (that Hell on earth) I'd writ  
With rotting brain afire;  
Men laughed, but now—how strange—  
They make obeisance to my lyre.

For man must die to win the wreath  
Held out by goddess Fame,  
Then people praise and say, "He wrought  
With rotting brain aflame."

## Lines Written When Sitting for a Sketch

Depict me, artist, as ye will;

Depict me, artist, as ye can:

“Rough-house” my features to your fill,

Or paint me as a gilded pill—

But paint me still a man.

Not that I deem the artist’s lot

Is one that’s not a manly art;

To live this life what man is not

An artist from the very start?

An artist he, who knowing, bears

The smile of many a Janus face,

He who a gay expression wears

In pain, with ne’er a hint or trace.

Or he who knows the hatred of

The poor, if he be well in wealth,

He who the slights of those above

Him feels, (a snob but snubs himself.)

Or yet, mayhap, he’s forced to bear

That cry that strikes the heart with dread,

The wail of little children fair

In want for daily bread.

*Depict me, artist, as ye will;*

*Depict me, artist, as ye can:*

*“Rough-house” my features to your fill,*

*Or paint me as a gilded pill—*

*But paint me still a man.*

## Pipe O' Brier

You may light a lamp, you may light a candle,  
You may strike a match and kindle a fire;  
But of all the lights you hold with a handle  
And light, oh, give me a pipe o' brier.

Where the sweet brook flows through field and bramble,  
A wheel to turn or reflect the spire  
Of country church in its placid ramble,  
I sit with a rod and a pipe o' brier.

The fields are green, and the willows dandle  
Their whip-like wings for the winds a lyre,  
And the bad brook babbles the latest scandal  
Of the trout eloped with the angler's wire;

And Spring has fled from March, the vandal,  
And the world is gay in bright attire,  
In stream and field and leaves that dandle,  
And, yes, ah yes, in the pipe o' brier.

Stop, Father Time, and drop your sandal,  
Your fleeting sands, your seythe so dire—  
Can it be Heaven can hold a candle  
To this, ah this, and a pipe o' brier?

## A Visit

The fire, laid and lit, burned in the hall;  
The sunlight on the white wainscoting fell;  
And I, why I had come, I cannot tell—  
Well say for tea, and talk that's known as "small."  
You sat enfolded in a silken shawl,  
And loose and flimsy things that Arabs sell—  
'Twere better, better thus, and seemed as well  
As tight-laced dames that sit along the wall.

Your eyes, dear, seemed so gentle, thoughtful, true,  
(That time, just past, I caught you unawares),  
And restful as the Heaven's azure blue,  
Not hoping, doubting not, as through the vale  
Of earth's affairs they gazed—ah, may your cares  
Fade as before the summer sun the hail.

## A Daughter's Lament

The mother that bore me, gone before me,  
    Gone to the saints above—  
I dream of her face and I dream of her grace  
    And I love to dream of her love;  
I dream of the tenderly care she gave,  
    If but for an hour or two,  
For she was sent to a fairer land  
    When I was brought to a new.

The mother that raised me, petted and praised me,  
    Until I had grown to see  
She'd taken a child whose life she'd styled  
    For rank cupidity;  
She'd managed a match considered a "catch"  
    High up on the social scroll,  
(The mother that bore me, gone before me—  
    The other had killed my soul.)

## **Song For—**

One is for Love, and two is for Hope,  
And three is for Will and Care,  
By ancient elms where branches slope  
To bend as though in prayer;  
And ah, a little prayer for one  
Upon a stormy sea,  
One known when youth had scarce begun,  
When all the world was yet to run—  
That world of you and me!

One is for Love, and two is for Hope,  
And three is for Will and Care,  
To bravely follow your horoscope  
And fight and do and dare.  
Like to a battled mariner  
By cruel coast and bar,  
Range ye o' nights your harbor lights  
That gleam and glint afar;  
The friendly beacon lights that play  
The shelving shores along  
To show the way. Eight bells! 'Tis day.  
So here I end the song.

# In Lighter Vein

---

## To Delaware

Addicks is vanquished, Delaware, cheer up!  
The Board of Trade may dig you out some day,  
For you have memories, and still have Gray;  
The State goes wet, you still may have your cup.  
You have your Country Club, where *all* may sup;  
Such things as caste have long been thrown away;  
The Blue Hen's Chickens all are one today—  
Here's to you, Delaware, and "bottoms up!"

To you then, Delaware, this artless rhyme,  
By one not e'en a native to your shore;  
Only a wanderer from clime to clime,  
Whose name must ever chain him to your breast—  
You, with your scarce one hundred miles or more,  
Your Wilmington, and that dead sea—the rest.

## The Philadelphia Van Dusens in 1908

What one, I say, who ladder-climbs,  
When social aims the efforts goad,  
What one who wades the pungent slimes  
Through cut and snub and plays the toad,  
What one, I say, is so obscure  
In Fashion's lesser minuet,  
But has not known and felt the lure  
Of Mrs. Frank Van Dusen's set?

On Chestnut's southern side we walk;  
Without us Hepner's had to go;  
With other sets the line of chalk  
We draw; we bow, but mingle—no!  
Come strangers to our town, what woe  
Be theirs, whate'er their crest and lance,  
Howe'er with bars their helm be met—  
For could we dare to take a chance,  
We, Mrs. Frank Van Dusen's set?

What child of ours has made a match  
In circle other than our own?  
Unless Mamma thought it a catch;  
And then, I'm sure with many a groan  
She saw her darling child and pet  
Wed some young dandy, money-blown,  
But not of our Van Dusen set.

L'ENVOI

Come, set the bars at Packard cars,  
On all the others place the ban!  
Beware the dice! Eat frappe'd ice!  
Cling to our clannish little clan!  
And Hammerstein in nineteen nine  
Will be awaiting for us yet,  
For could we dare to go up *there*,  
We, Mrs. Frank Van Dusen's set?

## The Girl at the Ball

The Parisian dress is a beautiful thing—  
It hangs so low on the bosom of snow,  
Save two small straps on the shoulders—  
With its spangles and spars and its train in the lee,  
The wondrous dress from over the sea  
Is the wonder of all the beholders,  
And you pray for the straps on the shoulders!

The music is soft; we are merry to-night,  
And we bow and we smirk and we chatter  
We snub and we spurn and we cut and we slight,  
We are cynical, or we flatter—  
By jove! the girl of the dress is gone!  
I wonder what is the matter!

And there is the beautiful feast, of course,  
With chicken croquettes (I hate them),  
With crabs, with salads, ices, cigars—  
So many I cannot relate them.  
A wonderful spread it was, I fain  
Would have each dame such a giver;  
She'd pin her guests to every need—  
Why, here is the girl of the dress again;  
She probably brought pins with her!

They are leaving! The autos crowd to the door;  
Insincerities simply bubble,  
From belle and bachelor, fop and bore  
And matron hunting trouble;

And when they return to their crested domes,  
As the birds of prey seek cover,  
I know, with the flash of a Sherlock Holmes,  
They won't do a thing to each other!

Adieu, society folk, good night  
To your flattery and your laughter!  
Adieu, fine dress, with the sweeping train,  
(For you saved a girl who was verging plain)  
And, as after the dress the sweeping train,  
So, after the ball the sting and the pain,  
Yes, after the ball the sting and the pain,  
The sting and the pain come after.

## The Rhyme of the Muddy Splashers

One of Columbia's daughters, you measly saw'd-off brat,  
You've forty and seven sisters—would one of 'em act  
like that?

His Nibs has given a million, an' damit, the road'll pay;  
So why are you stallin' an' fightin', an' why are you  
blockin' the play?

He'd make you a dinky garden, with berries an' flowers  
an' truck,

An' you're hollerin' bloody murder an' startin' to run  
amuck.

Your editors all approve it—Hoffecker, Cummins and  
Bell—

But you scoff at their bloomin' write-ups, an' start to  
raisin' Hell.

You say he controls the papers; well, what do the rich  
men do?

If you had twelve million sinkers there'd be something  
comin' to you.

One of Columbia's daughters, with Ohio an' Texas an'  
Maine,

Under the same old Eagle, out of the same old strain.

New York or Georgia or Kansas could cover you flat as  
a rug,

Or as one of your Muddy Splashers would crush a potato-  
bug.

Get awake to your wonderful chances, break the sandy  
chains and be free;

You've the finest bay in the country, and an open road  
to the sea.

Take a gift as he meant it—there—be a nice little gal!  
Give him a slap on the shoulder an' call him a Grand  
old Pal!

### For Mrs. Hemp

I am very glad to leave you, Mrs. Hemp,  
For your domicile is chilly and unkempt;  
    Though I would not wish to grieve you,  
    I could hardly yet deceive you—  
I am very glad to leave you, Mrs. Hemp.

## For T. (of Bacchus)

I saw him leaning on the bar,  
I tried to draw him thence;  
I could not get him very far  
With all my eloquence.

I saw him tack his zig-zag way  
Where, trays aloft, the waiters sped;  
I saw him fall, good-natured prey,  
Where girls were waiting to be fed.

I saw him at a table sit;  
The sable furs and flaunting hat  
Were there to revel in his wit—  
I mean what's known as *cat*.

I saw him light a longish weed  
Preparatory to a smoke,  
Through wreaths of blue I heard him feed  
The table laughter with a joke.

I saw a burnished cockroach flit  
Along the marble colonnade,  
For T. had thrown another fit—  
And likewise a cascade.

## **Calumny**

Vainly it tries by stealth to hatch  
A monstrous flock of vampire bats,  
Resembling in its tunnelings  
The green-fanged nastiness of rats.

## **John and Andy**

Now we hear that Andy's given  
Ten more millions of his green,  
Watch for John's next jump for Heaven  
Through his wells of gasoline.

## The Speed Maniac

I care not for my life, or life and limb of those  
Who rashly dare a course to trim on where my highway  
goes.

The road is mine, my *life*, as to my pistons oil;  
I forward fling as bright and lithe as a skilled fencer's  
foil.

My nigh four-thousand pounds, as one would hurl a stone,  
I hurl across the shaky bridge with many a creak and  
groan.

I sway around the curves, I burn along the grades;  
I hold a course that never swerves, in dust the landscape  
fades.

My purring motor sings, my float is working free,  
My clutch and gear and piston-rings and road are life  
to me.

Am I to blame if fools misjudge my speed and fall?  
Can dog or man or coach or steed arrest a cannon ball?

At every little inn I drive away the blues;  
I fill my bloomin', blasted skin up to the neck with  
“booze.”

I'm off! The night has come; the carbide glare is  
thrown

In wild, fantastic shadows dumb—I roar along alone.

Chilled with the night and dew, on time—not a second  
late!

Shaken and jarred and jolted through, I've crossed  
another State.

## To the Shore

On the runabout, six-sixty,  
Is the suitcase thonged and strapped;  
By my side a game mechanic  
    Neat putteed and leather capped;  
With the engine running freely  
    And the freed exhaust a-roar,  
We beat it down the stretches  
    Through the pine woods to the shore.

We've the force of sixty horses  
    In that engine running free,  
In a swirl of dust and gravel  
    We can leave 'em all a-lee—  
(With excuses to the ladies,  
    While their drivers softly swore)  
When we beat it down the stretches  
    Through the pine woods to the shore.

They can call it reckless driving,  
    Suicidal, what they like—  
Let me know my bolts and tires  
    And I'll burn the White Horse pike;  
And we're glad to take the chances  
    For the fun and nothing more,  
When we beat it down the stretches  
    Through the pine woods to the shore.

## The Double Cross

I asked a broker what he thought a buy,  
Who proved in language cool, concise and shrewd,  
That I must own, unless I were a prude,  
His stock, St. Paul, 'twas going to the sky.  
"Indeed," quoth he, "I daily can decry  
Timidity when cautious fools denude  
Themselves of profits easily accrued,  
And keep their tin in their tin boxes dry."

Oh fatal step, the stock fell down like lead!  
I failed to meet a call and took my loss.  
Oh humbled pride! oh, hope of profit fled!  
Back to my job! forget the sinful dross!  
Hist'ry repeats, another sucker bled!  
The House was short St. Paul—oh, double cross!

## The Priest

In a monastic pile remote and gray,  
I saw you at your Aves, prayers and beads;  
Bent in confession, telling their misdeeds,  
I saw before you contrite sinners pray.  
In sad death-chambers you have helped away  
Full scores of souls, no matter what their creeds;  
Led to the light the failing heart that needs  
Kind help; have seen a many a wedding-day.

So when I saw you in a Bucket Shop,  
With flaming tie, slouch hat and glance of stealth,  
You looked away; my very heart would stop  
That you, you of all men, should plunge for pelf—  
But let it rest, I never was a fop,  
I blame you not, I like the game myself!

## The Head Clerk

It seems there lies a world of knowledge too  
Behind that face of yours, that beard of drab—  
That countenance expressive as a slab—  
Of many things, and great, that *must* be true.  
And if, when *en arrière*, he comes to you,  
The chief, to tell you of the man who'd grab  
That job of yours, don't mind his little stab,  
Just say you button-holed a lamb you knew.

As hour by hour the traders sit and play,  
Think how they lost, how they will make it all;  
As hour by hour the ticker has its say,  
Time passes, and the markets rise and fall;  
The clerk Smith's debit-balance will survey,  
As Death, the last sure reaper of them all.

## Chair Warmers

Along with those who strive for paltry pelf,  
They sit and watch the board from day to day  
Warming their chairs, and plan tomorrow's play—  
But their tomorrow's ne'er tomorrow's self.  
Lacking the courage or the margin-wealth,  
They smoke and read and gossip or display  
Knowledge of what the leading roads can pay,  
How Jones grew rich and Smith went on the shelf.

Sit on, chair warmers, use it for a club,  
Your broker's board-room, for your broker hopes  
From barren fields he yet may orders grub—  
Nourished by seething seas of softest soaps.  
You're safer than the man who trades, you know—  
At times he's forced to go, you never go.

## Phone Business

“I wish to speak to Mr. John Van Dough.”

“Is that you Jack? I hate to bother you,

But this is straight, and if the street but knew  
They'd rush the market up ten points or so.

I know you like the stock, would like to know  
Some inside information that is true—

Smelting and Lead for an advance are due,  
And shorts will cover with a rush of woe.

“The plants are modern, business shrewdly run,

Profits have shown a steady net increase,

Always a market—what? you think so, son?

The Guggenheims are not a lot of geese!

Five hundred be enough? you bet you can!

Smelting at ninety-nine! right-oh, old man!”

## The Plunger

Stocks down, and he was bearish to the brim,  
When they were up he was the boldest bull;  
So now he walks—unless he has a pull  
With the caboose, and that rear flagman grim.  
He was the optimist, serene and trim,  
Who thinks they're going to the Heaven's dome,  
Or that they've leased the Hades for a home—  
Was long on nerve, short margins backing him.  
  
So thus, in love and war and in the street,  
A bold attempt is half success, they say;  
But do not burn your bridges, for retreat  
When the sweet birds of love and luck away!  
He is a bird, but phantom ghoulish crow,  
He who would win a fortune at a throw.



# PONCE DE LEON

## A PLAY

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# Ponce de Leon, A Play

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## List of Characters

JUAN PONCE DE LEON

THE DUKE OF GRANADA

THE DUCHESS OF GRANADA

NANCY DRUCILA (*her daughter*)

CAMILA (*Nancy's maid*)

FERNANDO ORTIZ

MAXIMILIAO PORRAS

FATHER JUSTINO

CHIEF AFRAID OF HIS SQUAW

STARLIGHT (*his daughter*)

HEAVY THUNDER (*his squaw*)

BLACK HAWK

NATAL (*a sailor*)

PERSKIPPIO (*Ponce de Leon's man-servant*)

*Attendants, etc.*

## Historical Note

Juan Ponce de Leon, conqueror and discoverer, was born in Aragon, Spain, about 1460. He was of noble family, served in the conquest of Granada, and in 1493 went with Columbus to Espanola; later he was governor, under Ovando, of the eastern part of that Island, whence he passed over to Puerto Rico in 1508 and began its conquest; in 1510 he was appointed its governor. From the Indians he heard of an "Island" called Bimini, and it was reported that this contained a miraculous spring which would restore the aged to youth; probably the supposed Island was Florida.

Ponce de Leon received in 1512 a grant to discover and settle Bimini; he sailed from Puerto Rico in March 1513, discovered some of the Bahamas, coasted along the Atlantic side to latitude 30° 8' N. and on Easter Sunday, April 8th, landed and took possession, calling the country Florida, from Pascua Florida, the Spanish name for Palm Sunday.

He returned to Florida again in 1521, then attempting to plant a colony, but was driven off by the Indians, being himself so badly wounded that he died shortly after reaching the coast of Cuba. (Universal Cyclopaedia).

For the purpose of this play the author has not tried to exactly conform with history.

## ACT I.

*Persons present:—The Duke of Granada, Fernando Ortiz, Maximiliao Porras, Perskippio and Natal. (Scene—a Florida glade or green with walks, rough huts in background, palms, moss, etc. Natal and Perskippio working on ropes and spars from the ship, the Duke standing nearby watching them. Fernando and Maximiliao standing to one side.)*

THE DUKE:—“Oh woe to him influenced by the persuasive powers of his fellow man! For what purpose has Ponce de Leon brought us to this strange new land? Conquest for the King of Spain, gold, gems mayhap? Bah! For a water of eternal youth, for a water of life, said to gush from a secret spring in some dark recess of these palmetto woods. Indeed, I cannot understand how I were ever such a fool as to embark on this foolish venture.”

MAXIMILIAO:—(*aside to Fernando*) “The Duke’s a fool all right; he don’t have to tell us. Do you know, ’tis said his every ducat of pocket-money is but by his wife’s kind permission.

FERNANDO:—“Softly, my dear Maximiliao, wait at least, I pray thee, till the man is my father-in-law.”

PERSKIPPIO:—(*looking up from his work*) “Nay, your Grace, if I may be so bold as to speak, I have great faith in the man. He is such a long-headed man. Do you know, that for fear that our stock of wine should not last till our return to Spain, that the supply might not suffice for the needs of the whole ship’s company, Ponce de Leon had had brought along and consigned to my special care golden grain from the rolling hills near Alhama, that he

might distil spirit from it with his tubes, retorts and queerly shaped vessels that were also given into my charge. But, alas! the great storm we so barely survived, washed the sacks in which the grain was stored on the after-deck into the sea, making all the sagacious fore-thought of Ponce de Leon in vain.

*A noble thing indeed is wise fore-thought;  
But when it fails we count it all as naught."*

THE DUKE:—"Hush, fool! But this loss of our grain is indeed a serious matter. Natal, go and find your commander and ask him to honor me with his presence that we may find if this reported loss is indeed true, and have from him his plans for finding this famed water of life of which we are in search." (Laughs sarcastically.)

NATAL:—"Yes, your Grace." (Exit.)

(*Fernando and Maximiliao, arm in arm, approach the Duke and Perskippio. Fernando drops Maximiliao's arm and respectfully addresses the Duke.*)

FERNANDO:—"Your Grace, I do respectfully request in marriage the hand of your daughter, the fair Drucila. Mayhap ere this you have known of my intentions, but I deem it only right and proper that I should thus speak to you."

THE DUKE:—"My dear Fernando, thou art a comely youth and one I indeed think most well of, but knowest thou not that Drucila's hand is promised to Ponce de Leon, on condition, however, that he find this fabled spring, partake of its waters, and be made young again,

and like to my daughter in all the fresh appearances of youth and strength.”

*(Fernando and Maximiliao laugh together long and heartily.)*

MAXIMILIAO:—“Why, your Grace, could indeed this water be found possessed of all its boasted charms, I doubt if could a barrel of it in any way affect that old and withered Ponce de Leon.”

PERSKIPPIO:—“Old and withered, but very much a man.”

THE DUKE:—“Silence, fool! Speak not unless thou art addressed.”

FERNANDO:—“Can your Grace be serious in this mad proposal?”

THE DUKE:—“Thou knowest the word of the Duke of Granada is his bond; but hush, for here now comes Ponce de Leon himself.”

*(Enter Ponce de Leon followed by Natal. Fernando and Maximiliao nod coolly. The Duke addresses Ponce de Leon.) (Note:—Ponce de Leon was at this time in his fifty-third year. He should be represented, more or less, distinctly old, with slight limp, cane, etc., so that the transformation that takes place before the audience in the latter part of this act may be all the more apparent.)*

THE DUKE:—“I am indeed chagrined to hear of the loss of our grain in the storm, grain that thou hadst intended to distil into spirits to supplement the supply for ourselves and our companions in this foreign land. Thinkest thou, Ponce de Leon, that thou wilt be success-

ful in making what wine we now have last while we are in this uncivilized country?"'

PONCE DE LEON:—"Alas no, your Grace, for, by the same token, I have ill news to impart to you. The sailors, during the last few hot nights, have, I find, broken into the supply, and, with that desire peculiar to the human race, were not in a mood to cease their maraudering till the last bottle had been emptied.

It is therefore of all the more import that we find this Spring of the water of life, for in it we may find effects that we should not otherwise have until our return to Spain."

THE DUKE:—"Therefore, Ponce de Leon, our hopes in you are now doubly centered."

PERSKIPPIO:—(*Interrupting.*)

*"Oh, noble Ponce de Leon, may you be  
Ever successful o'er this unknown sea;  
Mayhap the land Columbus did discover,  
Holds graft for you—as well as any other."*

PONCE DE LEON:—"My good Perskippio, to answer you in your own fashion:

*I sailed not to new lands for sake of graft,  
But just to laugh at those who at me laughed,  
For in this life there is no thing so sweet,  
As scoring those who prophesy defeat.*

(*Turning to the Duke.*)

*There is a water, Duke, prolonging life;  
'Tis said that it will end domestic strife."*

THE DUKE:—"Aye, and a common sentiment, tho' not an especially Christian one. For in all human nature there is that chaff with the wheat, that grain of resentment at those who criticize our actions. But as to thyself, Ponce de Leon, wert thou a score of years less of age, would look with favor on thy suit for the hand of my daughter, the fair Drucila. See therefore that thou findest this spring (since thou seemest not to care to divulge thy plans of search) and shouldst thou fail, wilt have thee branded as an impostor throughout my dukedom,

*But should thy search be fruitful with success,  
My daughter's hand is thine—and happiness."*

(*Exeunt the Duke, Fernando and Maximiliao. Fernando and Maximiliao turning to laugh at Ponce de Leon, the Duke departing with dignity.*)

PERSKIPPIO:—

*"Age is a thing of which a woman knows not;  
In marriage woman reapeth where she sows not.  
Could I but find that water like to booze  
No other man would occupy my shoes,  
No wife of mine would ever talk divorce,  
She'd stand for me and I for her, of course."*

PONCE DE LEON:—(*Walks over and slaps Perskippio heavily but good naturedly across the shoulders with his cane, making him stagger. Natal hides a smile with his hand.*) "Thou must ever have thy joke, my good Perskippio, though I have ever counted you as one who believes in me and my project."

PERSKIPPIO:—"Yes, Señor, I do indeed believe in you, for I have ever considered you a long-headed man,

*And one to have his way by hook or crook,  
E'en though his wife make him discharge the cook.*

But hark ye, Señor, I do hear footsteps approaching, For here does come the fair Drucila and others with her."

(Enter Drucila and her maid Camila, followed by the Duchess on the arm of Father Justino.)

DRUCILA:—(*Affectionately raising a lorgnette.*) "Ah, let me see, this is Ponce de Leon, is it not?"

CAMILA:—(*Soto Voce.*) "Yes, Señorita, 'tis Ponce de Leon, and old enough, I faith, to be thy great grandsire."

DRUCILA:—"Good day to you, Señor Ponce de Leon, they tell me that thou art in quest of a water of eternal youth. How sweet 'twould be if thou couldst find it and give some to my father, my good, dear old father, who would ever thus remain without the further ravages of age,

*Or e'en might be restored to his sweet youth,  
A lucky thing—or for a swain, forsooth."*

PONCE DE LEON:—(*Bowing.*)

*"I'll search o'er every land beneath the skies,  
To give him youth, me favor in your eyes."*

DUCHESS:—"Oh, noble Ponce de Leon, thou art indeed a charming swain. And had not my many and easily perceived charms forced me into early marriage with the Duke to avoid the importunities of innumerable suitors, and were I now in Drucila's place, would look with great

favor upon thy suit. But, aside from wishing you successful in whatever ventures you propose, I do assure you that I have no interest whatever in this water of youth, for it can be readily appreciated that with my youth and many charms it would be entirely superfluous."

(*Note—The Duchess should be represented as old, stout and not at all good-looking.*)

PONCE DE LEON:—"Thou art indeed a flower, Duchess, a fine flower, an English flower, a sun flower mayhap, and one that holds its seeds of life with great tenacity, and stands broad and strong in all its beauty, defying time."

THE DUCHESS:—(*Smirking.*) "Oh, noble Ponce de Leon!"

FATHER JUSTINO:—

"*Aye, a noble man admiring beauty,  
And with it all a fitting sense of duty.*"

PERSKIPPIO:—"I will not, because it is my duty."

PONCE DE LEON:—"Hush, fool."

DRUCILA:—"Well, adieu, Ponce de Leon, we go in search of the Duke, Maximilio and Fernando. Fernando has promised to make me a basket of Palmetto leaves."

(*Exeunt the Duchess, Father Justino, Drucila and Camila.*)

(*Camila turns and throws a rose at Perskippio. Natal and Perskippio grab for it. Perskippio gets it and places it in his bosom.*)

*(Enter Chief Afraid of his Squaw, Black Hawk and Starlight. Perskippio and Natal retreat in terror behind Ponce de Leon, Perskippio falling in his haste.)*

PONCE DE LEON:—"Fear not, men, the savages are, I believe, kindly disposed, else they would not have brought the maiden with them."

PERSKIPPPIO:—"Kindly disposed towards annexing our scalps, yes."

PONCE DE LEON:—"Good day, Oh, noble chief, I do bow my most deep respects to you, to you the head of the mighty tribe of Seminoles in this strange land you call Bimini. May our races ever be in friendly rivalry for what good this land can produce for the King of Spain."

THE CHIEF:—"Ugh, Chief Afraid of his Squaw fears and bows to none save she who rules his wigwam."

PONCE DE LEON:—"But, chief, for what purpose come you here amongst us if not for friendly greetings?"

CHIEF:—"Big chief only talk white chief. Big Chief Afraid of his Squaw hunt white Chief Ponce de Leon."

PONCE DE LEON:—"Happily indeed, for this is Ponce de Leon who now stands before you."

*(The Chief bows to the ground, Black Hawk draws his blanket around him and does not bow.)*

STARLIGHT:—"Oh, father, how beautiful is the white Chief."

THE CHIEF:—"Away, maiden, away to the ruler of my wigwam. Squaw told Chief send back soon." *(Exit Starlight, looking long and smilingly at Ponce de Leon. Black Hawk steps forward in a threatening manner, but the Chief pushes him back.)*

THE CHIEF:—"Oh, white chief, Black Hawk tell Chief Afraid of his Squaw white chief come Bimini hunt spring eternal youth. Oh, great white chief, Chief Afraid of his Squaw friend, no want white chief have heap trouble. Indians long hunt spring. No spring youth. No water life, heap big joke—Ugh."

BLACK HAWK:—"Heap big joke, ugh, ugh."

PONCE DE LEON:—(*Brokenly.*) "Oh, great chief, tell me, tell me, I implore you, that you speak in jest. Pray dash not thus my hopes of finding this fabled spring."

THE CHIEF:—"White chief no hope. No spring youth Bimini."

(*Ponce de Leon leans on Perskippio's shoulder and sobs.*)

PERSKIPPIO:—

*"Weep not, oh Sire, for the thing's not ended,  
For many things are broken—and yet mended."*

PONCE DE LEON:—"Oh, worthy Perskippio, thou art indeed more of a man than I."

THE CHIEF:—"White chief no be sad. Go back Spain. White chief big chief Spain. Many Squaw, many pa-poosie. Leave Seminoles Bimini, hunt deer, bear, turkey, with bow and arrow, make blankets, make heap good mats and huts, pick wild fruits, grow grain, Indian corn Seminoles call, grow—"

PONCE DE LEON:—(*Eagerly and loudly.*) "Stop Chief! Stop at once, I command thee! Didst thou say grain? Grain! By Saint Jago—the very thing Perskippio, of which we are in need! Take me Chief, I beseech thee, to where this grain is growing."

PERSKIPPIO:—

*“Said I not, Sire, that broken things get mended,  
And that the story was not fully ended!”*

THE CHIEF:—“Ugh, no take white chief. Chief Afraid of his Squaw want white chief go back Spain. White chief get grain, stay in land Seminoles call Bimini.”

PONCE DE LEON:—(*Producing purse of gold.*) “Chief, I will give thee fifty golden ducats if thou wilt but lead me to where this ripened grain is nourished.”

THE CHIEF:—“Not much heap, make two times heap—yes!”

PONCE DE LEON:—“Well, here art then one hundred golden ducats. Quick, Natal, go thou with Perskippio and fetch my stills, worms, retorts and carboys of liquids, that we may see if this Indian grain may be distilled and have spirit for all here assembled. And see that thou both observe the caution of saying naught of this matter to anyone.”

PERSKIPPIO:—“Aye, Sire, we shall be as mum as the grave.”

*(Exeunt Natal and Perskippio.)*

PONCE DE LEON:—“Oh Chief, at how great a distance grows this grain you call Indian corn? My very heart yearns for a sight of it, and for the opportunity of applying my skill in the distilling art my very throat does parch.”

THE CHIEF:—“Not heap far, white chief. In hills back palmetto woods. Maiden Starlight run there two winks. Heap fine maiden, Starlight. White chief got squaw?”

BLACK HAWK:—(*Furiously*) “Ugh, Starlight squaw Black Hawk. Get enough wampum two moons. Ugh, ugh, ugh!”

PONCE DE LEON:—“No, chief, Ponce de Leon has no wife.

*And since there is no spring for him to find,  
The chance of wife for him is left behind,*

*Unless there be some other chance or show,  
As indicated by Perskippio*

*Who now returns; so let us quickly bring  
The still to where the grain is ripening.”*

(As Ponce de Leon finishes these lines, Natal and Perskippio enter, bearing stills, retorts, carboys, etc. The Chief and Black Hawk bow low before Ponce de Leon.)

THE CHIEF:—“Oh, great white chief! White chief heap big medicine man.”

BLACK HAWK:—“Ugh, ugh, ugh! Heap bad medicine.”  
(*Makes awful faces and contortions.*)

PERSKIPPIO:—“Here we are, Sire; with all things safely brought.”

PONCE DE LEON:—“Forward then, all, and let no man say aught of this discovery.”

(*Exeunt Ponce de Leon, Chief Afraid of his Squaw, Black Hawk, Natal and Perskippio. Natal, Perskippio and Black Hawk carry the distilling apparatus, the latter with the greatest apparent awe.*)

(*Enter chorus of Indian maidens in loose Indian costumes, moccasins. Maidens with long, flowing black hair. Sing songs on subject generally, or songs to be inserted or suggested by management. First song as follows:—*)

*We are some little Indian maids,  
We love to flirt with Indian braves,  
Within the dark palmetto shades  
Where Ponce de Leon ever craves  
That water in this land.  
And when it's found our Indian braves  
Will have a lot of sand—  
Will have a lot of sand.*

*Now Ponce de Leon seems to think  
That water good for thirst,  
For aged people, too—we wink—  
[Chorus wink at audience.]  
Our braves will scalp him first.  
They'll make him stop his big bazzoo  
About eternal youth,  
And leave this country, fair and new,  
To redskin love and truth.  
Yes, leave us all in peace behind  
A-watching from the sand,  
And he'll regret he came to find  
That water in this land.*

*We are some little Indian girls,  
We flirt and play with Indian boys,  
We comb our flowing raven curls  
With fins and shells and other toys  
We find upon the strand—  
And what care we for beads of glass  
Brought from a foreign land—  
Brought from a foreign land!*

*Now Ponce de Leon wants to change  
Our simple native ways;  
He next our dresses will arrange  
And have us laced in stays.  
He'll have us knot our flowing hair  
As maidens come from Spain,  
Or have us tiny slippers wear  
That cause exceeding pain.  
But well we know our Indians yet  
Will drive him from the strand,  
And he'll regret he came to get  
That water in this land.*

*We are some little Indian girls,  
We flirt and play with Indian boys,  
We comb our flowing raven curls  
With fins and shells and other toys  
We find upon the strand—  
And what care we for beads of glass  
Brought from a foreign land—  
Brought from a foreign land!*

*(Exeunt chorus.)*

*(Enter Nancy Drucila, carrying a basket made of palmetto leaves, followed by Fernando.)*

DRUCILA:—"Love me, you say, Fernando? And so says Ponce de Leon. He, at least, endeavors to find the water of youth that he may be more acceptable to me and also fulfill the conditions imposed by my father, the Duke; but what have you done to prove this love of yours you speak of? You make me a basket of palmetto leaves and let it rest at that."

FERNANDO:—"Prove it, Nancy! Thou well knowest that I would go through fire to prove it, or gladly accomplish any task thou shouldst care to set me."

DRUCILA:—"You mean it, Señor?"

FERNANDO:—"I hope you do indeed believe me when I say so."

DRUCILA:—"Well, Fernando, I do not love Ponce de Leon, nor can I ever do so. (*Fernando attempts to draw Drucila to him, but she repels him.*) But knowest well my father's word is law and just as much his bond, and should by any evil chance Señor Juan be successful in his quest

*This water will, alas, be my undoing,  
And I condemned to weeping nights and rueing."*

FERNANDO:—"Oh, poor, sweet, Drucila."

DRUCILA:—"But mark you well, Fernando, while I look with favor on thy suit, I do give thee yet naught of promise, but charge thee to be ever vigilant and watchful of this Ponce de Leon person, for he is a sagacious man, and one to leave no stone unturned in accomplishing his desires. Watch thou, therefore, that he impose not upon the Duke,

*And thus impose upon my own sweet self  
So I am doomed—and you go on the shelf!"*

FERNANDO:—"Oh, sweet Drucila! Never harm shall come to you where watches thy Fernando. Dost know, sweet Nancy Drucila, that I have composed a song especially for thee and would fain sing it proclaiming the love I bear you."

DRUCILA:—"Oh, please do, Fernando, I am all attention."

FERNANDO:—(Sings.)

*Nancy, my Nancy, say, do you love me?*

*Will you not answer, will you not say?*

*Well do I know you are far, far above me,*

*Well do I know you are brighter than day;*

*Still, oh my Nancy, how oft' have I told you*

*How great my love for you, how great is its sway;  
Hear me, oh, hear me, 'tis no idle fancy,*

*Hear me, my darling, hear me I pray.*

*Oft' have I walked in the gloaming beside you,*

*Longing to hold you at last in my arms;*

*Lucky, oh lucky, is he who shall bride you—*

*You with the wealth of your womanly charms;*

*Come to me, Nancy, no ill can betide you—*

*Come and but love me and rest in my arms.*

*Nancy, when with you I ever am better,*

*For moves all around you a holier air;*

*Free! I am free from each fastening fetter,*

*As free as a spirit for pouring a prayer.*

*Nancy, how deeply, how deeply your debtor*

*You make me, dispelling my sin and my care;*

*Nancy, come Nancy, 'twere better, much better,*

*To cancel all owing and start on the square.*

*Nancy, my Nancy, say, do you love me?*

*Will you not answer, will you not say?*

*Well do I know you are far, far above me,*

*Well do I know you are brighter than day;*

*Still, oh my Nancy, how oft' have I told you  
How great my love for you, how great is its sway;  
Hear me, oh, hear me, 'tis no idle fancy,  
Hear me, my darling, hear me I pray.*

DRUCILA:—"Oh, dear Fernando, that's just too cute and perfect for anything. Forward! Courage! Be of good cheer!" (*Exit Drucila, throwing a kiss to Fernando, Fernando running after her.*)

(Enter Ponce de Leon, *Chief Afraid of his Squaw, Black Hawk, Natal and Perskippio*. Ponce de Leon holding aloft a quart bottle (white glass) of the spirit resulting from the distilling, *Chief Afraid of his Squaw* carrying on his shoulder a five gallon, clear glass bottle of the same liquor. Both bottles of quaint, queer old fashioned shapes.)

PONCE DE LEON:—"Triumph! Triumph, Perskippio! Great the achievement of man's science in this modern age. And look ye, Natal, (*holding up the bottle*) 'tis as white and clear as where the moonlight plays on Espanol's lakes! We'll call this spirit moonshine. Oh Chief, 'twas wisely spended gold that did induce thee to inform me where those corn fields lay! But now to put our labor to the test, to see if all its fruits fill all desires. (*Ponce de Leon removes stopper of the quart bottle he carries, and takes a swallow of the liquor. A gratified smile passes over his features, and placing his hand on his heart he bows to the Chief and Perskippio in turn.*) The very nectar of the gods is this sweet moonshine! (*Drinks again.*) And ah, Perskippio, it does burn

like fire, and run through all my veins with warmth. How long it seems since those maraudering rogues consumed the last supply. (*Drinks again, straightens up, smiles and expands his chest.*) Why Chief, I feel as I had dropped a score of years, warmed as I am by this sweet moonshine, precious child of my own distilling!” (*Looks at bottle fondly.*)

PERSKIPPIO:—“And truly younger thou indeed dost seem, Sire! ’Twould seem thy features lose a look of strain. Thy step does seem more sprightly and thine eye

*Dost glisten as a boy’s let out of school!  
Why should not this exception prove the rule  
Of thy great honor? May not moonshine be  
The hunted water of eternity,  
Discovered sudden by some lucky fluke—  
To put one over on that pompous Duke.”*

PONCE DE LEON:—“Oh noble, noble, good Perskippio! Oh brilliant man of all the arts and charms that never faileth me. I am young. I am young (*throws away his cane and does some graceful steps*) and no more shall the terrors of age assail me! Eureka! I am young! I have discovered the water of youth eternal. Glorious happiness is in store for me. I shall marry the Duke’s daughter, the fair Drucila, and with the still and cornfield I shall secretly obtain supplies of this blessed moonshine, and all will be well with me in this happy land the Seminoles call Bimini. I am young—I am young—I am young—I am young—I am young—I am young!!”

*(As Ponce de Leon thus expresses his youth, he jumps around the stage in a most lively manner, upsets Natal, clasps Chief Afraid of his Squaw in his arms in a wild embrace (the Chief evidently most greatly astonished) slaps Black Hawk heavily on the back. Black Hawk scowls most terribly and draws his blanket tighter around his shoulders. Perskippio doubled with laughter.)*

BLACK HAWK:—"Ugh, heap bad medicine, Chief. White chief make war dance. Black Hawk get sclap, what say?" *(Draws knife.)*

CHIEF:—"No make war dance. White chief heap glad. Wait!"

*(While the Indians are talking, as above, Ponce de Leon swaggers up and down the stage in the most boyish manner.)*

PERSKIPPIO:—"It would be well to hurry Sire, for we know not at what moment some one may approach."

PONCE DE LEON:—"Right thou art, good, wise Perskippio. Natal, this affair must be kept one of strictest secrecy. Dost mark me well and understand completely?"

NATAL:—"Would he whose life you saved along Bahama's shore betray thee?"

PONCE DE LEON:—"Ah, how sweet and true the friendship of devoted allies. I do drink to it in this clear moonshine that has made me young again!" *(Drinks, corks bottle and puts it away in breast pocket of his coat.)*

CHIEF:—"White chief no find spring youth! Find Indian corn. Make bad medicine, ugh! Heap big secret. No talk, want heap wampum!"

PONCE DE LEON:—"What! Canst not see that I am no longer a rich, old man? I am but a boy, a mere youth, with my possessions but my youth and strength and fortune yet before me to be made. Gold! I have no gold, for I am but a boy!" (*Starts to whistle and spin around on his heels.*)

CHIEF:—"No wampum, make heap talk. Heavy Thunder tell chief get wampum! Heavy Thunder bad medicine!"

PONCE DE LEON:—(*Handing his purse to the chief.*) "Well, relentless one, take this, the last of a boy's allowance—the last of his last allowance from his father; (*smiles at Perskippio.*) Take it, but on the following conditions only: Remember, Chief, that I have discovered the spring of the water of youth—that I am young, always very, very young! Say naught of Indian corn and 'bad medicine' distilling, and remember that thou art at all times to do as I command thee."

THE CHIEF:—"Ugh! White Chief heap young brave, Chief Afraid of his Squaw no talk! What white chief want Seminole do?"

PONCE DE LEON:—"Hide at once, in yon thick clump of ferns beyond the tall palmetto palm—(*points*) my precious moonshine. And hasten, Chief, for hear I not the voice of the fair Drucila talking to Fernando—and others with them?" (*The Chief hastens to the bed of ferns and quickly hides the five gallon bottle, Black Hawk watching him closely. He returns to Ponce de Leon making strange passes with his arms. As he finishes these gestures there enter Drucila on the arm of Fernando, followed by Camila. The Duchess enters on the arm of Maximiliao, the Duke walks with Father Justino.*)

PONCE DE LEON:—"Oh Duke, oh fair Drucila, oh Duchess, oh holy Father Justino, and you young men of mine own age and degree—look at me and listen. I have discovered the spring of the water of youth, have partaken of its waters, am young once more, and shall ever thus remain! Oh Duke, if in thine heart thou didst harbor doubts as to the success of this expedition, repent now in sack-cloth and ashes!"

*Oh, fair Drucila, naught shall mar  
Our happiness today,  
For I have found the spring of youth  
And love will find the way."*

(*Ponce de Leon takes Drucila's hand in his and attempts to draw her to him, but she breaks away and runs to Fernando. Fernando steps up to Ponce de Leon in a threatening manner, but Juan roughly pushes him back, when the Duke interferes.*)

THE DUKE:—"It is indeed wonderful, Ponce de Leon. I can scarce believe my eyes. Wonderful! Wonderful!"

THE DUCHESS:—"And said I not thou wert a charming swain? And now so young! No cane, no limp, that glad young smile! Now thou art doubly charming and mindest me of one of my favorite suitors, ere I had wed the Duke. Poor youth, he killed himself for love of me."

FATHER JUSTINO:—"Holy Mary! What change hath the good Virgin worked in thee, Ponce de Leon?"

MAXIMILIAO (*aside to Fernando*):—"Verily younger, Fernando, yet I would not fear him at the small swords."

THE DUKE:—"Señor Juan, this is indeed a most mar-

vellous discovery, and one reflecting very greatly to thy credit. My daughter's hand is thine. An altar shall be built of hewn cypress limbs

*And wedded thou shalt be upon the morrow,  
In youth and happiness—with never sorrow."*

*(As the Duke pronounces these last words Drucila falls back in a faint in Fernando's arms, but recovers immediately.)*

FERNANDO:—(*aside to Drucila*) “Oh, my poor Drucila, I fear thou art lost. Wilt fly with me?”

DRUCILA:—(*Answers aside*) “Nay, Fernando, my father's word is law.”

FATHER JUSTINO:—“But tell us, my son, how and where the spring was found.”

PONCE DE LEON:—“Good father, your grace, dear Drucila and all here assembled, let me assure you it was a most arduous task, taxing my well-known courage and resource to the utmost. Informed, as I was by this good Seminole chief, of the approximate location of the spring, away we went through the palmetto forests, staggered, at times waist-deep, through swamps able to be penetrated but by the very bravest—swamps filled with creatures like to giant lizards—till we came at length to bare, dry, upward-sloping ground, ending in a series of enormous rocks, capped by a flinty pinnacle to the height of a ship's mast! At the most imminent peril of our lives, Perskippio alone with me, we succeeded in climbing and dragging ourselves to the apex of this rocky fortress—and there, ah there—with a trickling over-flow of not

sufficient volume to be perceived from the ground beneath  
—there lay the crystal waters of the spring of eternal  
youth!”

(*The Duke, the Duchess and Father Justino, Perskippio and Natal and Camila in chorus:*)—“Bravo!  
Bravo! Wonderful! Wonderful!”

FERNANDO:—“Why, Ponce de Leon, thy dress doth give  
the lie to all thy statements. Thou look’st as thou had  
strolled in Madrid, not through swamps.”

PONCE DE LEON:—“Who says I lie! By Saint Jago,  
I will bear that from no man lest it be with blood.”  
(*Draws short sword.*)

PERSKIPPIO:—“Softly gentlemen, softly, I pray thee—  
if I may be so bold as to speak. It seems there is but  
a misunderstanding here. Knowest not, Señor Fernando,  
that Perskippio is a valet worthy of his salt, and had  
fresh clothing laid out for Señor Juan against our re-  
turn?”

PONCE DE LEON:—“Quite true, Perskippio, thou art in-  
deed a good and ready servant.”

FERNANDO:—“I do retract my statements as to thy  
dress, Señor Ponce de Leon. But I would still fain see  
this water of which you speak.”

PONCE DE LEON:—“And that thou shalt, and right  
quickly, young man! (*Draws the bottle from his breast*)  
For here it is, some of that fair water of eternal youth!  
And see, it is as clear and white as is upon a lake the  
moonshine!” (*Ponce de Leon drinks, smiles youthfully  
and gaily, and puts the bottle back in his breast.* Ex-  
clamations of delight and astonishment from the Duke,

*Father Justino, the Duchess, Camila, Natal and Per-skippio. While these exclamations and congratulations are taking place, Black Hawk glides to the fern bed, entirely unobserved, and exits with the large bottle of liquor hidden there.)*

*(Enter Heavy Thunder with a half-completed mat in her hand. She rushes at Chief Afraid of his Squaw and strikes at him several time with the mat. The Chief crouches behind Natal, Heavy Thunder still pursuing him. The others present most greatly astonished.)*

HEAVY THUNDER:—"Ugh! Chief heap big fool! Where Starlight? Told send Starlight back. Chief fool, heap fool, heap big fool! Ugh!" (Enter Starlight.)

STARLIGHT:—"Starlight hide palmetto palms. Watch white chief." (Smiles longly at Ponce de Leon. Heavy Thunder slaps her and looks relieved.)

THE DUKE:—"Oh, noble Ponce de Leon, by this thy feat in the realm of discovery, thou shalt surely be immortal throughout all history. Drucila, come hither! There, place thy hand in that of Ponce de Leon. (Places her hand in his as they stand facing the audience.) My children, may ye be ever happy and prosperous, and may ye both, by the aid of this marvelous discovery, remain young and unaffected by the ravages of time and change. Father Justino, bless them at once, I command thee."

*(Father Justino steps forward and raises his hands over the couple. Drucila, her hand in Ponce de Leon's, stands with her face turned aside, looking at Fernando*

*with an expression of deep despair. Ponce de Leon, beaming youthfully, opens the breast of his coat slightly and gazes at the bottle. Chorus of cheers and congratulations from the Duchess, Camila, the Duke, Natal and Perskippio; 'Ughs' from the Indians.)*

**PERSKIPPIO:**—(*Who has edged forward to the front of the stage, turns and points with an extended arm at Ponce de Leon and Drucila.*)

*"Here they stand, the happy couple;  
Marriages are made above;  
Here are hearts and hands united  
In a world of love!  
Let me sing a little ditty  
On this water fair of youth,  
That the happy man and maiden  
May know all the truth.*

*(Sings.)*

*Oh, the water of life, oh, the water of life,  
It's the finest I ever have seen;  
Now I haven't a wife, but you bet, on your life,  
If I had one I'd think her a queen.  
I'd joke and I'd laugh and I'd stand for her gaff  
Though the hour be morning or noon;  
When the dame would suspec' me, and therefore henpeck  
me,  
That water would be a great boon, great boon—  
Oh, that water would be a great boon!*

*We would never have fights over woman's rights,  
There would never be war and woes,  
We'd be sure to forget the suffragette  
Idea, where that water flows;  
And we never would go to far Reno  
To ruin a home and life,  
For there never could be an affinity  
With the water of life, of life, of life,  
With the water of life, of life.*

*I'd return from the club without fear of a drub  
Though the clock strike the hour of three,  
No wife on the stair would be waiting me there  
Demanding alimony;  
For there never could be incompatibility,  
In our domicile stress or strife,  
We'd be sure to agree in sweet unity  
On the water of life, of life, of life,  
On the water of life, of life."*

*(Curtain.)*

## ACT II.

(*Scene:—A sylvan dell in Florida. In the rear centre of the stage a lake. In front of it an altar of hewn cypress limbs decked with garlands and native flowers. Across the right end of the stage lies the large fallen trunk of a hollow tree, a fern bed having grown up along its entire length on the side furthest from the stage centre. At the left of the stage may be observed in the distant scenery one end of the line of rough huts—as in the first act. Persons present:—Perskippio and Natal. Perskippio seated on the log, Natal standing near-by gazing at the newly erected altar, holding in his hand an axe.*)

PERSKIPPIO:—“Oh Natal, my back does ache. (*Placing hand on the small of his back.*) I have culled strange flowers and blossoms and have woven wreathes till I fain would rest my weary limbs.”

NATAL:—“And I, I have toiled with this axe, erecting yon holy contrivance till I think, saving Mary’s grace, that I do hate the very sight of it. Strange work for a sailor man and not a fitting one. And yet, for Ponce de Leon, I would do as much again and more.”

PERSKIPPIO:—“Aye, a noble gentleman, in whose service I am most proud to be engaged. I hope our plans do not miscarry in this contriving for the fulfillment of his desires.”

NATAL:—“Oh, never fear that there may be mischance. ‘Tis all this ceremony I condemn. Faith, when I took the lass I left in Spain, I walked her to the priest at his commands, or rather she walked me, that we be wed.

*But it were ever thus, the rich in pride  
Do what the poor have not the price to hide."*

PERSKIPPPIO:—"Thou art an evil-minded rogue and one not at all to my liking. And yet I hope that in the lady Ponce de Leon may not be deceived. They say a cat with softest fur has sharpest claws."

NATAL:—"And think you then they'll fight, as do most men of wealth with dames of blood? I tell thee, Perskippio, it doth seem that gladly-mated pairs be wretched poor and of a station like to our degree."

PERSKIPPPIO:—"Of that I rightly know not, but what thou sayest may have in it much of truth. And yet all will be well with Ponce de Leon as long as naught destroys or interrupts a constant supply of that good moonshine for his use, for then he can laugh, and he who does naught but laugh with a woman, my good Natal, must perforce be reasonably safe from her displeasures."

NATAL:—"God grant that it may be. Now I must leave for where my comrades wait on the St. John's.

*For there our good ship safely rides the flow  
Of ebb and flood, unheeding all the while,  
Vicissitudes of human strife and woe  
Engendered but by vanity and guile."*

(*Exit Natal.*)

PERSKIPPPIO:—(*Places his head in his hands and shakes it in grave thought. Rises, stretches out his arms and yawns heavily. He addresses himself as follows—*)

"Very true, 'good, wise, noble' Perskippio, very true

indeed. But if thou art to remain ‘good,’ ‘wise,’ ‘noble’ in the eyes of thy master thou must be ever vigilant and watchful lest aught should arise to combat his plans. I do have most grave doubts of these Seminoles, and as to what of truth their word may hold. (*Sits down again upon the log.*) But the still, oh, the still, I love it still, though it does not make us still; but when it is still after it’s stilling, it is still stilling our worry and care.” (*Perskippio yawns again and stretches out at full length on the log. He draws his hat over his face and in a moment commences to snore most loudly. There is then plainly heard in the wing stamping moccasined feet of Indians dancing and chanting. (Ugh ugh ugh, ugh ugh ugh, ugh ugh ugh, ugh ugh ugh.) Perskippio awakens, and raises on his elbow with a startled expression on his face. He draws his hat tightly down on his head and listens. As the Indians enter the stage, he rolls, entirely unobserved, from the log into the tall ferns and lies hidden there.*)

(Enter *Chief Afraid of his Squaw* and *Black Hawk*, the latter carrying the large five gallon bottle of moonshine. They should run on the stage with the characteristic crouching gait of war dancing Indians, their bodies bent forward, their faces turned to the audience.)

THE CHIEF and BLACK HAWK in chorus:—

“Ugh, ugh, ugh, Indians know  
White chief Ponce de Leon go  
Hunt spring youth, get young again—  
Find it through bad medicine.

*Seminole hide the moonshine water,  
Chief no marry big brave's daughter:*

*Get big heap of wampum first,  
Ponce de Leon die of thirst—*

*Die, and Indians dance in glee;  
Seminole have their Bimini.*

*Ugh ugh ugh, ugh ugh ugh, ugh ugh ugh, ugh ugh ugh.”*

BLACK HAWK:—(*Pointing at altar*) “More bad medicine, Chief.”

THE CHIEF:—“Not bad medicine. White man's heap big joke catch squaw.”

BLACK HAWK:—“Ponce de Leon no catch Starlight—get scalp first.” (*Feels the edge of his knife.*)

THE CHIEF:—“Black Hawk heap big fool, white chief want white brave's daughter. Hide moonshine, two Indians get heap wampum. White chief say must have moonshine, marry white maiden.”

BLACK HAWK:—“Starlight make eyes Ponce de Leon like fawn.”

THE CHIEF:—“Starlight heap young maiden—heap fool. Hide moonshine in hollow tree. (*Points*) Bend ferns round like Seminoles hide canoe. Moonshine safe like bear in hole. White chief no find.”

BLACK HAWK:—“Black Hawk hide moonshine in palmetto woods; no good cache. Chief no fool, hide in tree.”

(*Black Hawk hides the large bottle in the hollow log and carefully draws the ferns around the opening. The Seminoles then examine the altar, the chief holding up two of the wreathes.*)

THE CHIEF:—"Look—white chief make moons."  
(Laughs in guttural tone.)

BLACK HAWK:—(*Placing a hand to his ear*) "Listen!  
Hear steps like wounded doe."

(Enter Ponce de Leon, his hand on his forehead, dragging along with weary, shaking limbs.)

PONCE DE LEON:—"Discovered at last! And after what a weary search. And so thou hast betrayed me, thou they callest chief of the mighty tribe of Seminoles. Betrayed me in wickedly purloining from its hiding place that product of the distilling carefully secreted for my use. By Saint Jago, I must have it back, and that right quickly. Knowest thou naught of honor and that foul treachery of such degree is worthy of the direst chastisement at the hands of my men? Art thou then an Indian giver, Chief?"

THE CHIEF:—"White chief want moonshine, give more wampum. Black Hawk say white chief got heap gold. No give big enough heap keep bad medicine secret."

BLACK HAWK:—"Squaw tell chief get big heap. Heavy Thunder no take joke like Starlight."

PONCE DE LEON:—"More gold! Have I not told you that my supply has already been exhausted in satisfying your insatiate demands? Dost think that I am the Duke of Granada, rolling in a wealth of gold—producing lands and vineyards enabling me to bribe and sway all little men to whatever plans and uses I may care to set them?"

THE CHIEF:—"Give more wampum, get moonshine, then white maiden. White maiden got gold; give heap back."

PONCE DE LEON:—"No, no chief, on the honor of a

Spaniard, I have no more ducats that I can give thee. The day is set, the hour approaches, and this the very spot appointed for the ceremony.

*Gaze then, oh Chief, upon yon holy altar,  
For it is there I wed the Duke's fair daughter;  
You would not see me old and weakly falter—  
Give me, I pray, a drop of that sweet water."*

THE CHIEF:—"White chief give more wampum, be young again, marry pale-face maiden, go back Spain, have big heap papooses, be heap happy—ugh!"

ponce de LEON:—(*Placing a hand on his throbbing brow*) "No longer tantalize me thus, oh chief, I beseech thee. Again and again have I told you that I have no more gold."

BLACK HAWK:—"White chief heap big fool. No cry like squaw. Go back white brave get more gold—then Seminoles give moonshine."

THE CHIEF:—"Ugh! Black Hawk no fool. Go chief, Indians come two suns. Now go trail palmetto woods."

*(Exeunt the Chief and Black Hawk at the left of the stage, Ponce de Leon limping after them, rubbing his forehead, calling, as follows.)*

ponce de LEON:—"Just one drop, Chief, if no more, just one little drop, I beseech thee. Just a drop, just a drop, just a drop."

*(Ponce de Leon limps toward the fallen tree with the intention of seating himself thereon, when Perskippio cautiously raises his head from his hiding-place, without being observed by his master. He draws down again, and as Juan approaches the seat pops up like a Jack-in-the-box.)*

PERSKIPPIO:—"Boo—Sire!"

PONCE DE LEON:—(*Greatly startled—crossing himself*)  
"Ah—'tis thou then, varlet. And what art thou doing here, rogue—hiding as one fearing the gallows, then jumping out as a montebank at a country fair—what meanest thou, sirrah?"

PERSKIPPIO:—"While no montebank, Sire, I am still a quack in that I have a remedy to offer thee. Nay, Sir Juan, it was but now upon this fallen tree, Natal just departed to the ship, and all our work complete, I'd laid me down to rest my tired limbs, when I was waked by voices seeming strange and of a foreign tone to that we know."

PONCE DE LEON:—"Go on; what next?"

PERSKIPPIO:—"While yet I heard, and ere they came in sight, I rolled from off the log and hid me there in yon tall ferns, and oh, Sir Juan, the Virgin must have smiled when I was born, for those red knaves with whom you just have talked, placed in the very tree that hid my form the stolen moonshine we have hunted so."

(*Perskippio bends aside the ferns and draws out the bottle.*)

PONCE DE LEON:—(*Stepping forward eagerly and taking Perskippio's hand in his.*) "Good, good, Perskippio, this is indeed a providential find, for with the Indians I could do naught, and was all but in despair. Thou wert ever more the friend than servant, and, anon, will tell thee how thy watchfulness in my interest doth touch my heart with pride. But now there's little time that we may waste, for I am but a wreck of what I was, a toy run

down for want of moonshine oil, and oh, Perskippio, I am but a babe for strength, with burning head—and parched is my throat. I do tell thee that our native wines are not to be compared for strength with this we have distilled.”

*(Ponce de Leon, holding up the large bottle with an effort, drinks deeply and smiles.)*

PERSKIPPPIO:—“I would drink more, and quickly, Sire, for we know not when some-one may approach.”

PONCE DE LEON:—“Right thou art Perskippio, for since we have started on this set campaign, we should carry it out boldly. Do you hold the bottle while I sit me on the log.” *(Perskippio holds up the large bottle together with Ponce de Leon, seated, who drinks deeply in rapid swallows.)* “There! That saved my life! The ceremony starts some hours hence, and by that time I’m sure to be as spry as any maid could wish of any swain. Yet hold with me again to make it sure. *(Together they again lift the large bottle, Ponce de Leon seated, Perskippio standing, while Juan drinks deeply.)* “And now, that I may keep myself just right, we’ll fill the other bottle I have kept, as the fond mem’ry of a long dead friend.”

*(Juan smiles foolishly and produces the small bottle from his breast, holding it up to the light. He then steadies it on the log while Perskippio fills it from the large one. Juan, in a low tone, though plainly heard by the audience, tells Perskippio not to spill any.)*

PONCE DE LEON:—*(Having placed the small bottle in his coat.)* “And now, Perskippio, this large bottle, our reserve, must be hidden, and that quickly. Go thou then

with it to the hut of Father Justino, for we must take no more chances, and tell him that it is from Ponce de Leon, who requests him to care for and guard it against tomorrow as he would guard the holy water of the church itself. Victory is now in sight! We have won, we have won, Perskippio!

*And ere the sun has set will be the wedding,  
To bring me happiness—or roughest sledding!"*

PERSKIPPIO:—"Be it happiness, Sir Juan.

*Thy biddings now I go to do,  
And Sire, thou shalt surely know  
That never harm can come to you  
Where watches thy Perskippio."*

(Exit Perskippio with the large bottle, Ponce de Leon dancing gaily after him.)

(Enter chorus of Spanish maidens, who dance and sing songs on the subject generally. Other songs to be inserted or suggested by the management.) First song as follows:—)

*Out of the morn of maiden-hood,  
Here in the world we wait,  
With just one thought that never is taught  
But has come to us early or late;  
That we're to be loved and wooed and sought—  
Toys to be broken or mended again,  
Gems to be cherished or scorned of men,  
For such is a woman's fate—  
Out of the morn of maiden-hood,  
Here in the world we wait.*

*'Twas sweet in the morn of maiden-hood  
Though here in the world we wait;  
With a mother to bear our every care  
And safely guard our fate.  
That dear old mother with silver hair,  
With the patient ways and kindly face,  
There's never another could take her place—  
The place of a mother there.  
From the mother's world in maiden-hood,  
Here in the world we wait.*

*Because of the dreams of maiden-hood  
Here in the world we wait.  
In a girlish dream 'twill ever seem  
That the man is true and great;  
That heaven has righted the earthly scheme  
In violet, jessamine, marigold,  
And the world is small all truth to hold—  
And we hold and hold to a dream:  
Till, done with the dreams of maiden-hood,  
Here in the world we wait.*

*Done with the dreams of maiden-hood,  
Here in the world we wait;  
To manage a match considered a catch  
Or choose a happy mate;  
Properly—no undue dispatch,  
For that is the edict of fashion's way,  
And what would Mrs. Grundy say  
Of the maid, the widower, or the “batch?”  
Done with the dreams of maiden-hood,  
Here in the world we wait.*

*Out of the morn of maiden-hood,  
Here in the world we wait;  
Soon to be told that manifold  
Tale that the gods relate—  
Haply by valiant knight and bold,  
Under the silvery moon and the trees,  
Or yet in the parlor, the knight on his knees,  
Or yet by a Ponce de Leon old—  
Out of the morn of maiden-hood,  
Here in the world we wait.*

*(Exeunt chorus.)*

*(Enter the Duke, the Duchess, Drucila, Ponce de Leon and Camila, the Duchess and Drucila with pocket handkerchiefs out, weeping and hysterical. Camila also slightly affected.)*

THE DUCHESS:—“There, there, never mind my dear, for I know that thou shalt be very happy. So cry no more dearie, for you should remember that your mother will be ever ready to come to you and help smooth over any little domestic troubles, should they arise. *(Aside)* Children are always *such* a responsibility.”

THE DUKE:—*(Addressing Ponce de Leon)* “Sir Juan, you today have the honor to receive in marriage the hand of my daughter. By your courage and pertinacity you have been successful in your search, have found the fabled spring, become young again and have thus filled all my requirements toward winning thy suit for the fair Drucila. Thou dost indeed appear as young and sprightly as thou wert in the Granada campaign a score of years

ago.” (While the Duke thus addresses Ponce de Leon, Drucila and her mother weep in each other’s arms, and as he finishes break out into loud hysterical crying.)

ponce de leon:—(*Answering the Duke*) “Your Grace, you shall ever find in me the model son-in-law, a model husband for your daughter and ever a staunch and loyal supporter of the arms you bear. (*Addressing Drucila*) Oh fair Drucila, hard it is, I know, to bear the pangs of separation from a fond and indulgent mother, but know that dearer ties await thee, ties that every woman must look forward to, and eventually hold more dear.

*With my discovery of this blessed spring  
A life of joy awaits—let sorrows wing.’’*

(As Ponce de Leon smilingly finishes these lines, Drucila starts to weep again and hides behind the Duchess’ shoulder. Ponce de Leon feigns astonishment.)

THE DUCHESS:—“Be reasonable Drucila, take cheer and courage from Ponce de Leon. See how noble he is and how proud at having won thy father’s consent to thy hand. There, there, my daughter, thou art not to lose thy mother but are to acquire a husband to love and cherish you equally well. How plainly do I remember when I wedded the Duke, after having refused so many scores of suitors, that I did have the same foolish pangs at the time.” (And here the Duchess produces her handkerchief and commences to cry again most loudly.)

THE DUKE:—“Affairs do seem most well arranged and fitting for so important a ceremony. Duchess, Drucila child, I have had this altar builded and decked with these

native flowers and garlands, and, in that we have not here a church, with Father Justino and this builded shrine we can, I think, make very fair shift. I do hope that you both like it and approve, for it is all that we can do in a strange land. But come now, it is time we went to robe for the ceremony.”

PONCE DE LEON:—“Aye, your Grace, and I too. Adieu then all, till we here meet an hour hence.”

(*Exit Ponce de Leon, bowing and smiling and throwing a kiss to Drucila.*)

DRUCILA:—“Yes father, but leave me here a few moments I pray thee. And go thou too, dear mother, for I would rest here for a short while with Camila, to compose myself.”

CAMILA:—“May she have her way, your Graces, and I shall engage to bring her to you as straight as she does seem to be the more composed.”

(*The Duchess kisses Drucila and takes the Duke's arm.*)

THE DUKE:—“Adieu then, my daughter, and so we shall expect you in brief time.” (*Exeunt the Duke and Duchess.*)

CAMILA:—(*Taking Drucila's hands in hers*) “Grieve not, dear mistress. Why, thy hands are cold; thou hast a nervous chill. But remember, my dear mistress, that the anticipation is always worse than the reality. You know a Ponce de Leon young and a Ponce de Leon old are two very different persons. But had I not better

fetch your light wraps if you wish to remain here awhile?"'

DRUCILA:—(*More composed and seating herself on the log.*) "No, Camila, I thank you. You may go, and I shall join you and the others shortly."

CAMILA:—“Very well, dear mistress.” (*Camila starts to leave, but returns and throws her arms around Drucila, embracing her.*) (*Exit Camila.*)

(Enter Fernando.)

FERNANDO:—“Oh Drucila, I have sought thee everywhere. Do you still persist in your mad decision to abide by thy father's commands and waste thy young life on a man thou dost not love and one, methinks, that will not prove to love thee over deeply? Think, think, I pray thee, and re-consider thy dutiful consideration of thy father's wishes.”

DRUCILA:—“Dear Fernando, I have thought and thought, and prayed and prayed. Ponce de Leon I cannot wed. To me 'twould be a more than death, having, as I ever would, thoughts of thee and thy image ever before me. I love thee, Fernando, oh Fernando, I love thee so. (*Fernando clasps Drucila in his arms in a long embrace, Drucila clinging to him and embracing him tenderly. She then slowly and sadly removes his arms from her neck.*) But know, Fernando, that I ne'er shall be the wife of this Sir Juan. Dost see this dagger? (*Drawing it from her breast.*) Fernando, see, (*holding the dagger aloft.*) I do swear to thee by the holy Virgin, that ere good Father Justino can make us man and wife, I shall plunge it in

my breast and welcome death as gladly as do the birds the dawn.''*(Fernando cries out in horror, crosses himself and hides his face in his hands.)*

FERNANDO:—"Oh, dear, brave, beautiful Drucila! Thou must not die; thou must not have such dreadful thoughts. Oh, fly with me this instant, fly with me and save thyself from such a fate. And, by Saint Jago, if thou wilt not, Drucila, I die with thee—but others first."*(Fernando draws his sword.)*

DRUCILA:—*(Sheathing the dagger and concealing it in her bosom)* "Hush, hush, Fernando. Wait and be brave; for are we not of blood as pure as aught in Spain? Be patient with me and wait till the last. If die we must, 'twill be as Spaniards die. And yet, guided by woman's intuition, divining—call it what you will—I feel that ere the wedding's o'er there shall arise some more than happy chance to keep me from this union so unsought, and save us for our own sweet world of love. So at the altar stand and watch and wait, Fernando, and if that happy chance shouldst not arise before the priest says 'man and wife' you'll see the poniard drawn—then shall we die, we and no others, mark ye well, my dear? Oh dear Fernando, oh, I love thee so!"*(Fernando and Drucila clasp in a long embrace.)*

FERNANDO:—"I mark thee well, Drucila, and will wait and hope for the best. But thou knowest I am ever ready to die a thousand deaths for thee. Oh, Nancy Drucila, thou art now to me already more than wife, my wife, my soul, my life, all, all that heaven holds most dear and sacred thou art and shall always be."

(*Spotlight. Fernando sings*) :

*Oh, fair Drucila, oft' a thrill  
    You cause within the breast  
Of those who hear your laughter trill,  
Who see your smiles that linger still  
A sweet reflection of the will  
    Or fany—half unguessed.*

*And when I ponder o'er your face  
    That mem'ry can define—  
The curve of neck, the fringe of lace,  
The poise of head, the winsome grace—  
What other one could take your place,  
    You, whom I hold divine?*

*And is it strange that those whom fate  
    Return of love denied  
Should bitter grow, and learn to hate  
Their very life; though still they wait  
Until their 'lotted years abate—  
    The years that have but lied?"*

*Oh, fair Drucila, well I love  
    You for the blessings given;  
Your tenderness, as of the dove,  
Your purity, as saints above—  
For you have proved, and still shall prove,  
    My star of earth, from Heaven."*

DRUCILA:—(*Embracing him.*) “What a lovely song! Indeed I shall most diligently endeavor to be worthy of it. But we must now go to prepare for this hated cere-

mony, Fernando. Give me thine arm and let us so walk and talk and make arrangements.” (Exit *Drucila* and *Fernando* arm in arm, talking softly to each other.)

(Enter *Ponce de Leon*, *Perskippio*, *Natal* and other sailors from the ship. *Natal* carrying a boat hook.)

*PONCE DE LEON* :—“What happy auspices are not in this fair day embodied. A land of flowers, a brilliant sky with sun no whit o’ercast, and then awaiting love—love and my own sweet moonshine. *Perskippio*, I fain would know if e’er there’s been such fortune-favored marriage?”

*PERSKIPPIO* :—

“*Of marriages, it seems ’twould be better pay  
To throw one’s crest and coat of arms away  
And marry one not quite of one’s four hundred,  
Than to remain unwed through haughty pride  
To seek some stately lady for a bride,  
Then marry her and find (by jove), one’s blundered.*”

*PONCE DE LEON* :—“Oh, speak not thus, good *Perskippio*, speak not thus I do adjure thee.

*With this small flask, (producing it) that’s not the kind  
non-fillable,  
With this sweet liquor, (drinks) that is so distillable,  
I sure can any started blunder throttle  
By flashing forth my buzzy-wuzzy bottle  
And pouring out a modest drink or two  
For fretful dame in green or pink or blue,  
Until some fancied slight is off her chest,  
So the afore-said dame will let me rest.”*

*(As Ponce de Leon finishes these lines, he smiles foolishly at Perskippio, drinks again, leers at Natal, corks the bottle and places it in his coat.)*

NATAL:—"Faith, I had to come to Florida for mine."

PONCE DE LEON:—"Hush knave."

PERSKIPPIO:—"Thou knowest, Sire, while I seem to doubting be, best wishes for thy happiness are ever at my heart. I'd guard thee from the wiles of all the Seminoles that ever did infest this favored shore."

PONCE DE LEON:—"Perskippio, I have faith in thee and trust thee in all entirety. But here does come my bride-to-be and others of the wedding company assembled."

*(Enter the Duke with Drucila on his arm, followed by Fernando escorting the Duchess. With them Maximilio and Camila. The orchestra starts to play the wedding march from Lohengrin. Ponce de Leon bows deeply to Drucila, raising her hand and kissing it. The assembled party then groups around the altar.)*

THE DUKE:—"I do see naught of Father Justino, Sir Juan. Is this, the first marriage of Spaniards in Bimini, to be thus lightly slighted by the tardiness of the priest?"

PONCE DE LEON:—"Alas, it seems 'tis so, your Grace. Perskippio, go thou at once and hasten him, I command thee."

PERSKIPPIO:—"Aye, Sire" *(As Perskippio hastens to do his master's bidding, he bumps into Father Justino, who staggers onto the stage, very much intoxicated. Recovering from the shock of the collision, Perskippio leaps back exclaiming: "Saint Jago! We are lost." Cries of "dreadful," "dreadful," "shame," "shame," from the*

wedding party. Drucila joins Fernando and they smile in new-awakened hope at this interruption to the ceremony. Ponce de Leon shakes his fist at Father Justino, mouthing wordless threats. Father Justino halts swayingly in front of his flock and sings:—

“Oozing quickly, cold and horrid,  
Perspiration left my forehead,  
Streaming fast and far;  
From betwixt index and digit,  
Though I strove to hold it rigid,  
Dropt a half consumed cigar.  
  
Then I staggered, waving blindly,  
Though my spirit viewed it kindly,  
Then a sound of rushing waters or the  
swish of falling star;  
Murmurs, as of waves in shallows,  
Faces, as of ghosts from gallows,  
Viewed me from afar.  
  
Then acute delirium tremens,  
And they say I needed three men  
Muscled up to par,  
Beating me, as cruel jailers,  
Fighting me, as drowning sailors  
Clinging to a spar.  
  
Gasping, heaving at the stomach,  
As a fish upon a hummock  
When the tide’s receded far;  
As the flood in all its pride,  
Ah, I only wish that I’d  
Left the other bar.”

THE DUCHESS:—"Oh, the dreadful creature! Poor Drucila, poor Sir Juan, I fear thy wedding day is ruined."

PONCE DE LEON:—(*Sadly*) "I wonder if there's aught of it remains, or if there was unlucky spill or loss."

THE DUKE:—"Strange words, Sir Juan, I understand them not. But this I know, I shall abide my time, but still shall I have dealings with the priest."

DRUCILA:—"Oh, dear Fernando, said I not to hope?"

*(As the Duchess, Ponce de Leon, the Duke and Drucila converse, as above, Perskippio is seen in hurried whispered argument with Natal. They rush to the lake back of the altar where are two buckets. These they fill with water, and running to Father Justino, throw it over him, a part at a time, singing in chorus.)*

"Ponce de Leon has searched for the water of life,  
And, happily too, he has struck it;  
But the water you'll get it is equally wet,  
Though water that comes from a bucket,  
    Yo ho,  
Though water that comes from a bucket.

We'll sober you up for the ceremony  
With showers of clear cold water,  
For good Sir Juan has sailed over the sea  
To marry the Duke's fair daughter,  
    Yo ho,  
To marry the Duke's fair daughter.

*With prayers to the Virgin for such an offence  
To your reverend neck so supple,  
Good Father Justino, you now must commence  
To marry the happy couple,  
Yo ho,  
To marry the happy couple!"*

(*Perskippio and Natal lead Father Justino to the altar, the priest dazed but sobered. He passes his hand over his brow; wiping the water from his eyes, he produces a moist prayer-book. Exclamations of "bravo," "bravo," "serves him right," from the Duke and Duchess. Drucila and Fernando in despair. Sir Juan regretful at the occurrence—though delighted.*)

THE DUKE:—"Sir Juan, what we have seen unfitting is indeed. And yet, thou knowest well my word's my bond. The ceremony shall proceed."

(*Drucila and Ponce de Leon stand at the altar with Father Justino. Ponce de Leon, beaming youthfully, opens the breast of his coat slightly and gazes fondly at the bottle. Drucila, a look of great despair on her face, places a trembling hand in her bosom, prepared to draw the poniard. Fernando, straining forward, his hand on the hilt of his sword.*)

(*Enter Chief Afraid of his Squaw and Black Hawk. They trot onto the stage pointing at Ponce de Leon as they run, exclaiming "Ugh, ugh, ugh, ugh, ugh." Ponce de Leon, greatly agitated, turns aside and drinks rapidly from the bottle. Perskippio and Natal throw up their hands.*)

THE DUKE:—"Ah, Drucila child, it does seem the noble Seminoles have come to witness thy marriage."

CHIEF:—(*addressing the Duke.*) "Oh, heap big brave, white chief (*pointing at Sir Juan*), no find water youth—heap big joke. Find grain, Indian corn Seminoles call—make bad medicine distilling, call it moonshine. (*Laughs in guttural tone. Black Hawk making a series of horrible faces at Sir Juan.*)

THE DUKE:—(*Placing his hand to his brow as one dazed*) "Moonshine! Moonshine! And is not moonshine the discovered water of youth? My brain does whirl, what jesting can this be?"

THE CHIEF:—"Heap big joke, brave; ugh, heap joke."

ponce de LEON:—"Pray heed him not, your Grace. He knows not what he speaks." (*Sir Juan gazes imploringly at Perskippio for aid. The latter shakes his head in gloom and throws up his hands.*)

THE DUKE:—(*Addressing Ponce de Leon.*) "Ah, I see! Vile wretch, thou hast wilfully deceived me, perpetrating this great insult upon my daughter, the Duchess and myself. Away! Get hence! Thou shalt be rightly branded the impostor that thou art. (*Drucila rushes to Fernando's arms and they clasp in a long embrace.*)

THE DUCHESS:—"Oh, wicked, gay deceiver, how I spurn thee now."

FATHER JUSTINO:—"My plight is all his fault. He sent the moonshine stuff; and I did drink it by a sad mistake, thinking it but some water from the spring."

MAXIMILIAO:—(*Shaking his sword hilt in Sir Juan's face.*) "For this thine act thou shalt atone to me, for having given insult to a friend."

*(While Ponce de Leon is being denounced, as above, Camila joins Perskippio, and they converse, hand in hand, in evident sympathy with Sir Juan.)*

*(Enter Heavy Thunder. She rushes at Chief Afraid of his Squaw, grabbing him by the back of the neck and shaking her finger in his face.)*

HEAVY THUNDER:—"Where been? Chief fool, heap fool, heap big fool. Where been, where been?"

*(Enter Starlight, who, during the denunciation of Ponce de Leon, may be seen peeping from behind a palmetto palm. Starlight's entry upon the stage is followed by the choruses of Indian and Spanish maidens, who group at the right and left of the stage, having entered by both wings.)*

STARLIGHT:—*(She rushes to Ponce de Leon, throwing her left arm around his neck and with the right warding off his detractors and protecting him.)* "Starlight love white chief! Have moonshine and Starlight—be heap happy!" *(She kisses Sir Juan and he embraces her.)*

BLACK HAWK:—*(In great rage)* "Ugh, no marry Starlight, Starlight for Black Hawk!" *(Black Hawk draws a tomahawk and rushes at Ponce de Leon, when Natal, leaping forward, drives the Seminole back, using the boat hook for a spear. Perskippio, though greatly terrified, also interferes by pulling the Indian from the rear by his blanket. Chorus of cheers from the assembly.)*

*(Curtain.)*







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